

[14 December, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

Concern of experts on nuclear deal with US

†2448. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many nuclear experts in India have expressed their concern over the clause incorporated in the Bill related to the Indo-American nuclear deal passed recently by the American Senate;

(b) if so, the facts thereof alongwith the names of the experts who have expressed their concern over the matter; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) As a significant foreign policy initiative, the India-US nuclear understanding has been subject of public discussion and debate. Several commentators have expressed their views over various aspects of the Waiver Bills that were being considered in the U.S. Congress to enable full civil nuclear energy cooperation between India and U.S.

(c) The Government of India had conveyed its concerns with regard to the waiver bills to the US Government. Prime Minister's statements in Parliament in August 2006 have spelt out the Government position on this matter. The two Governments have held discussions at senior levels to ensure that the final legislation would enable the U.S. Administration to fulfill all its commitments under the July 18, 2005 Indo-US Joint Statement and the March 2006 Separation Plan.

Threat to business persons and professionals

2449. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

DR. PRABHA THAKUR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken cognizance of the reports of threats given to Indian business persons and professionals by the Maoist Groups;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether Government have taken up the issue with Government of Nepal;

(c) if so, the response of the Nepal Government;

(d) whether steps taken by them were satisfactory; and

(e) the steps that have been taken by our Embassy to address the concerns of Indian business persons and professionals?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes.

(b) to (e) Cases involving the safety and security of Indians in Nepal, including Indian business and joint ventures have been taken up by the Government of India with the Government of Nepal, including at the highest levels. The Government of Nepal has been requested to investigate these cases and provide adequate security and safety to all Indians, whose welfare and security is of prime concern to the Government of India. Government of Nepal has assured us of their full cooperation and has promised to take necessary action to address our concerns.

Indo-Russian working group on terrorism

2450. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Russia have called for concerted efforts by the international community to overcome threats posed by terrorists and urged Government worldwide to deny "safe heaven" to terrorists anywhere in their territories;

(b) whether both countries have also agreed that energy security is a vital component of national and international counter-terrorism strategies and have accordingly decided to exchange experiences to counter the emerging threat to oil and gas installations from terrorists; and

(c) if so, other steps both India and Russia have agreed after meeting of the Indo-Russian Joint working group on combating international terrorism held recently?